



*Welcome* to the 36th Annual Ypsilanti Historic Home Tour. Since 1977, the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation has been pleased and proud to present one of the community's most important resources, its wealth of historic architecture. This year's homeowners and business owners have graciously agreed to open their doors so that we all may see and appreciate the results of historic preservation efforts in the Ypsilanti area. We take this opportunity to thank them. Enjoy the tour!

Although the structures are numbered for your convenience in the brochure, you are free to visit them in any order you wish.

Visitors may be asked to remove shoes. As a courtesy to the homeowners, PLEASE no food or drink, smoking, pets, unsupervised children, strollers, or photography inside the homes.

The ticket holder expressly assumes all responsibility for any personal injury or property damage occurring while on tour.



## ABOUT THE *Foundation*

The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the idea that one of Ypsilanti's greatest resources is its wealth of historic architecture. The Foundation seeks to increase public understanding and appreciation of these architectural links with our past and works to promote the conservation, rehabilitation, and utilization of these important community assets.



The Foundation publishes its newsletter, *Heritage News*, several times a year and distributes it free of charge to its membership by mail and to the general public at various locations throughout the city. The Foundation's Web site is [www.yhf.org](http://www.yhf.org). Since 1977, the Foundation's Historic Structure Marker Awards Program has recognized more than 150 homes, businesses, churches, and other community buildings in Ypsilanti for significant historic architecture and continuing, sensitive maintenance. The annual Historic Home Tour is sponsored by the Foundation. Proceeds from the tour fund the Marker Awards, community projects, and education programs on preservation-related topics, which are held every year in September, November, January, and March and are open to the public. For more information on the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation or to find out about becoming a member, contact Henry Prebys, president, at 487-0595, or [yhf.org](http://yhf.org)



Lynda Hummel

7

325 East Cross Street

## *Cheryl and Matt Marzullo*

This stately home in the Queen Anne Style was built in 1894 by Jehiel J. Strang. We know nothing about him except that he liked the design well enough to build a similar house one hundred yards up the street. The Queen Anne style, with its high-pitched roof and gables, protruding bay windows and porches, and decorative squares, diamonds, and arches, was popular from the 1870s to the 1890s. These details on the Marzullo house are easy to appreciate because the intricate three-color paint scheme draws our attention to them.

LeRoy Lewis bought the home from Mr. Strang's estate in 1920 and lived in it until 1960. From then on, it changed hands almost yearly until 1991, when it was purchased by Sharryl Sullivan. She and her husband, Peter Cousins, restored everything except the woodwork, returning the house to its original beauty with period wallpapers and paints. Sadly, many of these changes have been stripped away. But the present owners of one year, Cheryl and Matt Marzullo, have begun to re-restore the home with bold paint colors suited to their young family. One of the most striking features is the original fireplace, with tiles that were duplicated by Greenfield Village based on some pieces that remained of the surround. The old windows, with nineteenth-century glass, flood the rooms with light to welcome you into this very charming home.



Lynda Hummel

328 East Cross Street

## *Michael and Joanie Newberry*

The Eaton-Frentner House is a latecomer to the residential district east of Depot Town known as the Historic East Side. By the 1860s this neighborhood was already filled with the residences of working class citizens who found employment in the businesses and mills of the growing economic hub of Ypsilanti. The railroad brought even more wealth to the community, and the number of emerging middle-class Victorian homes increased significantly in this area during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

Built late in 1891, this vernacular Queen Anne was financed by Louisa Converse through the Ypsilanti Building and Loan Association and willed to her daughter, Addie, and son-in law, Joseph Eaton, who was a house painter and wallpaper hanger. The house's exterior paint-scheme-to-come closely approximates the original color selections Joseph made. Most rooms have layers of painted-over wallpaper, and a few of the original papers hung by Joseph have been uncovered in select areas of the house. Second owners Fred and Lizzie Frentner purchased the house in 1935. It stayed in the family until the death of Fred and Lizzie's daughter, Lucille Grant, in 2009. Lucille had lived in the house her entire life.

Michael and Joanie Newberry, the third owners, purchased the house in 2009. The couple were charmed by how little the house had suffered from inappropriate updates and changes. It retains its original varnished pine woodwork, doors, and hardware (only the kitchen woodwork has been painted). Existing kitchen elements are under restoration to reflect its former appearance, and the bathroom has been returned to its original appearance. The walls are enlivened by mixed media oil paintings and sculpture created by artist Joanie, introducing a funky street aesthetic that is in perfect contrast to the historic charm of the space.



Lynda Hummel

210 Oak Street

## *Jennifer Wenzel and Kate Stroud*

This vernacular Italianate cube was likely built in 1850 by James Haggarty (or Haggerty), a carpenter from New York. He lived in the house with his wife, Harriet, and four children until at least 1901. Subsequent residents included men who worked as “ladder makers” at Michigan Ladder. August Kruger, a farmer and laborer, owned the house from 1920 through the mid-1940s. The house retains many original features, including the flooring, the front door, and a window with the address etched on it. The home has had two additions since its mid-nineteenth-century beginnings; the colonial columns probably were added as styles changed.

An owner still fondly recalled by current neighbors is Clarence Andrew Ver Burg, who lived in the house for fifty years, from 1945 until his death in 1995 at the age of ninety-six. Mr. Ver Burg came to Ypsilanti in 1935 from New London, Ohio, with his wife, Lucy. Ver Burg owned the John Deere dealership (then on River Street) for fourteen years and after that worked as a custodian at Roosevelt High School.

Ver Burg was an enthusiastic gardener. When Jenn Wenzel, a plant lover with a degree in horticulture from Ferris State, bought the house in May 2012, she was immediately thankful for the fifteen inches of topsoil Clarence had left behind. “It was the dirt and the great garage that captured my heart,” says Wenzel. Tourgoers will see the fruits of Jenn and her partner Kate’s labors, not only in the huge backyard garden, but in updates to the home that include two colorful bedrooms upstairs and a new island counter in the kitchen. Previous owners Kevin Gady and Meredith Lane updated the kitchen and bathroom.





Lynda Hummel

52 East Cross Street

## *Bird Brain Building— Sidetrack Bar and Grill*

*Linda French*

Ypsilanti's Michigan Central Railroad Depot opened in 1838, connecting Ypsilanti to Detroit. The 1850 Masonic Block, centered by what is today the gothic revival Bird Brain Building, was the first building constructed in Depot Town to accommodate the primarily male commuters. The businesses in the Masonic Block included saloons, off-track betting, a small grocery store, and, on the second floor, Ma Bush and her girls.

The modern history of Bird Brain begins in the 1950s. As a result of declining railroad traffic, Bird Brain and other Depot Town storefronts sat vacant as businesses came to prefer downtown locations. In 1971 the Artrain, a traveling museum featuring Michigan artists, was coming to Depot Town. Office space and a public area were needed. The ground floor of Bird Brain provided both, and 52 East Cross came to be known as the Artrain Building.

EMU professors Bev and Don Shankwiler saw the Artrain Building's potential. In 1973 they purchased the building, removed more than seven tons of old plaster and debris, and transformed it into their three-story urban townhouse. It was Depot Town's first restoration project.

The Artrain Building remained a private residence until 2003, when it was purchased by Bird Brain, Inc., wholesalers of decorative garden accessories. Bird Brain completed the vision of the Shankwilers, adding a new kitchen, bathrooms, stairways, and skylights. The crown jewel of the restoration was the fabrication of the long missing exterior arch.

In June 2012, Linda French and the Sidetrack Bar and Grill purchased the Bird Brain Building. Plans include expanded restaurant seating, a large new kitchen, catering facilities, and new bathrooms.



5

1005 West Cross Street

## *Christina McCahan and Micah Range*

The history of this 123-year-old Victorian is a little sketchy, but one thing is certain today: the mother-daughter team of Christina McCahan and Micah Range are determined to preserve and restore it, after years of neglect and patchwork repairs.

The two distinct entryways on each end of the splendid wrap-around porch suggest the original intent was for the house to be a duplex or boarding house, with business booming in Ypsilanti during the turn of the nineteenth century. Many working class residents of diverse professions are listed as having lived in the home during the early 1900s, from a miner and a grocer to builders, woodworkers, and a chauffeur for the Normal College (now EMU). In 1903 Arthur J Ashdown, a founder of the Ypsilanti Reed Furniture Company, lived here. In 1912, Lloyd Walker, a teacher of penmanship and bookkeeping at Cleary Business College, resided in the house.

A rather colorful chapter in the home's history occurred during the 1970s, when then-resident Reverend Timothy J. O'Malley is said to have embraced the drug culture of the time and to have practiced fencing in the backyard. Some unconventional nuns, who did not wear habits, also ran an outreach program from the home during the same period. Teachers and students have also passed through the house. In its student days, the front lawn was strewn with plastic beer cups most weekends.

Christina and Micah were pleasantly surprised to find the house in good shape structurally, although in need of many updates and replacement appliances. Originally from the west coast, the mother and daughter bring varied backgrounds (Micah is a graphic designer and Christina a licensed esthetician) and good eyes to their stated task of bringing the house back to prominence as a modern family home. From the moment they moved in, they've immersed themselves in home improvement projects. We are so pleased to have them on this year's home tour and celebrate them for rescuing this delightful old Victorian.



Lynda Hummel

929 Pearl Street

## *Jim and Mary Streeter*

This colonial revival-style home in the Normal Park neighborhood was built in 1924 by Robert and Irene Schrepper. In 1988, Jim and Mary Streeter bought the house from Mrs. Schrepper. The house will celebrate its ninetieth birthday next year, and it is remarkable that it has had only two owners. When the Streeters moved in with their three young sons, the house was mostly unchanged from 1924, except for a family room added in the 1940s. The interior doors even retained their original skeleton keys.

The Streeters were on this home tour in 1992. Their boys have since left and provided them with three grandchildren. One of the three bedrooms is now Mary's quilting room and another is a guest room, soon to be transformed into an office for Jim, who recently retired after thirty-eight years as director of the EMU Athletic Media Relations Department.

When Mary first saw the house, it was the screened porch that runs along the east side that sold her on it. "We gain this room every summer," she says, "and it is always so exciting." The porch is furnished with old and new wicker and the glider couch from the screened porch at Mary's childhood home in Detroit's Rosedale Park.

The biggest change the Streeters have made is to the once tiny kitchen. In fall 2011 they bumped it out five feet, transforming it into a beautiful light-filled blue-and-white space that is now Mary's favorite room. The new kitchen, with its white beadboard cupboards and vintage enamel-topped table anchoring the center, looks like it has always been there.

Mary's collections of old wood furniture pieces (most picked up for a song), ironstone dishes, quilts and quilted wall hangings, and cross-stitch samplers enliven this warm and comfortable family home. On the fireplace mantel in the living room is her terrific collection of carved wood birds from Chelsea woodcarver Marlene Dusibier.





2 West Michigan Avenue

## *Materials Unlimited*

Materials Unlimited is an antique store specializing in architectural salvage, fine and vintage antique furniture, and restored antique lighting. It has been in its current location since 1981.

The 1927 Art Deco building was designed by the architects Cuthbert & Cuthbert. Based in Ann Arbor, they were responsible for a few of the houses in the Barton Hills neighborhood. Ivan Cuthbert was known for his work around Ann Arbor and southeast Michigan and for the Platt School. There is no mention of this building other than on a photograph taken in 1928, a year after it was finished.

The building was designed as a multi-use facility, incorporating a Dixie Gasoline station, the Staebler and Sons service station, and an Oakland-Pontiac automobile dealership. Originally a balcony extended around the entire length of the east side. Used cars were sold from the balcony, and the interior of the main floor was the new-car showroom. The top floor was originally open and looked down onto the showroom. This is where the sales offices were located. The lowest level was where automotive repairs and services took place.

During World War II, the bomber plant built at Willow Run Airport brought a huge influx of workers and military personnel. During this time the facility underwent a major transition, becoming a USO hall. A dance floor and bandstand were installed in one corner of the main-floor showroom.

After the war, the building became a Moose Lodge. It remained that until Reynold Lowe, owner of Materials Unlimited, purchased the property from the Moose in 1981.

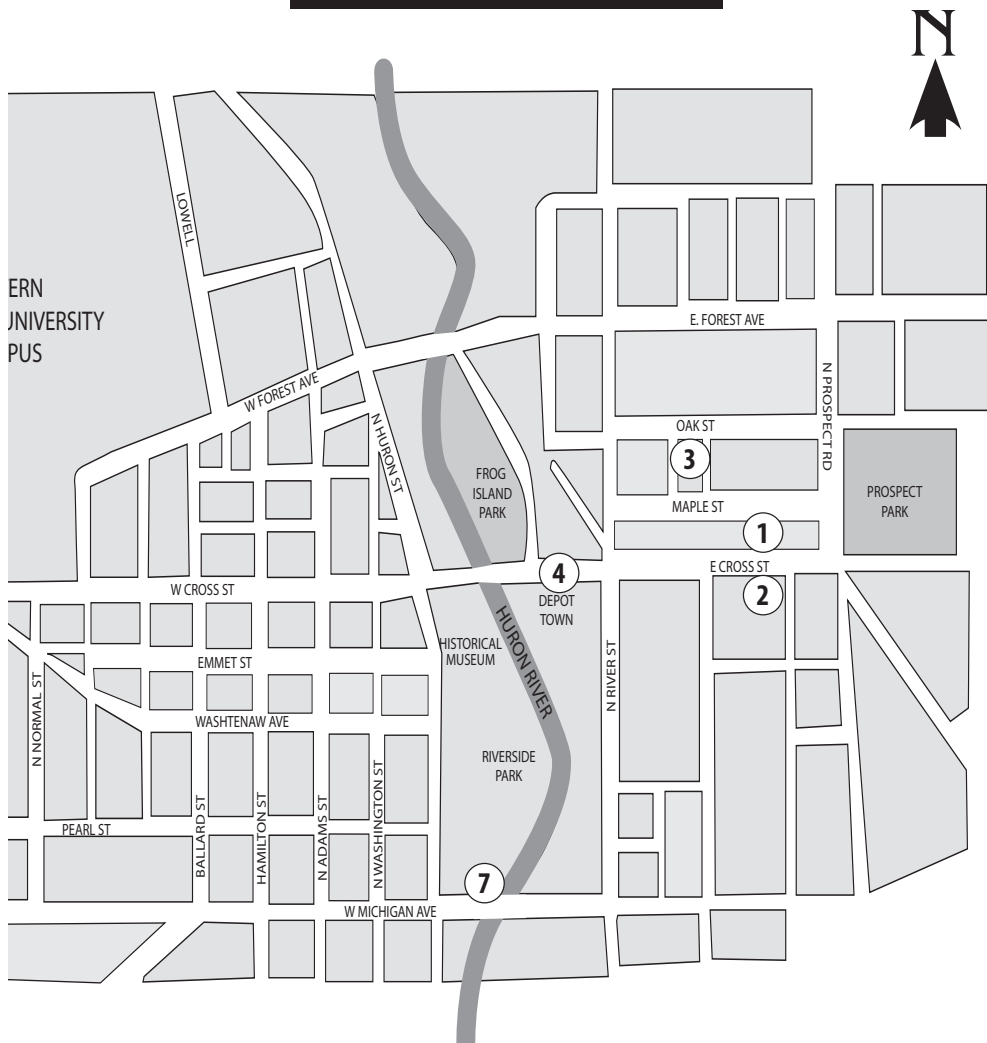
# Key to the Tour

- ❑ 1. 325 East Cross Street
- ❑ 2. 328 East Cross Street
- ❑ 3. 210 Oak Street
- ❑ 4. Bird Brain Building—  
Sidetrack Bar & Grill  
52 East Cross Street
- ❑ 5. 1005 West Cross Street
- ❑ 6. 929 Pearl Street
- ❑ 7. Materials Unlimited  
2 West Michigan Avenue



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A sincere thanks also to . . .

- ∞ Norton's Flowers & Gifts for their stunning and unique floral arrangements for the homes on today's tour.
- ∞ All of the homeowners, tenants, volunteer guides, and ticket sellers.
- ∞ Penny Schreiber, for editing the home tour booklet.
- ∞ Lynda Hummel, for her outstanding photography.
- ∞ Octavian Prundeanu, for heading up day-of-tour ticket sales.
- ∞ Pattie Harrington, for her terrific design of the home tour booklet and poster.
- ∞ Jan Arps-Prundeanu, for selling the ads for the home tour booklet.
- ∞ Haab's Restaurant, Salt City Antiques, and Materials Unlimited, in downtown Ypsilanti; Nelson Amos Studio, in Depot Town; Norton's Flowers and Gifts, on Washtenaw Avenue; and Downtown Home and Garden, in Ann Arbor; for selling tickets before the day of the tour.

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